



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

REVIEWS

PRESENT-DAY PUNCTUATION

A trolley-car advertisement of a popular dictionary exhorts the straphanger to "step lively, the language is growing," and offers as proof of its statement a short list of oddities in new words. In like manner the students of language, from Grimm onward, have focused our attention on the word, not only as the measure of language growth, but also as the monopolist of language phenomena. That pronunciation, grammar, or punctuation shares at all in language growth has been relatively ignored.

But that punctuation, at least, is a live and fascinating language phenomenon, as well as a flexible and adaptable adjunct to a writer's art, Summey's *Modern Punctuation*^{*} is stimulating proof. Not only is this study, a Columbia dissertation, a discriminating summary and estimate of the few previous studies of punctuation, but the spirit of approach amply justifies the title *Modern*. The Preface announces that American books of 1900 or later and American periodicals of 1917 and 1918 are the field for investigation. Contemporaneously there are no limits; the range is from Woodrow Wilson to Harold Bell Wright, and from the *Atlantic* to the *Saturday Evening Post*. The views of both the printer and the pedant are taken into account. The practice and admonition of authors of textbooks on composition, the University of Chicago *Manual of Style*, and a printer acquaintance of the author are alike consulted.

Sometimes the pedant finds his favorite counsels seriously questioned, or even disregarded—as, for example, in the allowance of the deadly "comma splice," or in the non-insistence of the semicolon between co-ordinate clauses containing commas. Writers, too, come in for their share of censure for allowing both printer and pedant in more senses than one to fix punctuation, for the development of punctuation is found to be an integral part of the development of style. The use of the sentence as the determining unit in punctuation is questioned, as is mere clearness or grammatical structure. The position of the sentence

^{*} *Modern Punctuation, Its Utilities and Conventions*. By GEORGE SUMMEY, JR. New York: Oxford University Press, 1919. Pp. vii+265.

in paragraphs or in larger units, and its emphasis or movement are shown to have weight in determining punctuation.

The book shows four divisions, each of individual interest. The first section is concerned with clarifying the terminology to be used in discussing the subject of punctuation. The terms *point* and *punctuation* are so defined as to make the ambiguous term *punctuation mark* unnecessary, and to establish a needed distinction between the science or art of punctuation and the typographical characters it employs. Likewise *parenthesis* is made to mean a structural group of words, while the typographical character commonly used to enclose this unit is called a *curve*. The next two parts together form what is in effect a cross-reference of punctuation proper. In the one, punctuation is investigated from the standpoint of the several structural units; in the other, the uses of the points one by one are investigated. This method has thoroughness and emphasis to balance against inevitable repetition and duplication. The final section is devoted to comparative tables and discussions of the frequency and the distribution of points as found in the range of material and authors already indicated. Here is revealed an abundance of informing facts, such as that the average number of points per sentence in periodicals is less than two and a half, and that the elaborate punctuation of Pater and of Henry James is done in great part with the comma, which comprises greatly more than half of the total number of points used.

The net effect of the book on the reader, student or teacher, should be to stimulate an open-minded alertness to punctuation "as she is done," and particularly to serve as a corrective for those who get their ideas of punctuation from textbooks on composition written by authors who in turn get their ideas of punctuation from other textbooks on composition. For the writer there should come the refreshing conviction that punctuation is not a mechanical constant, but a progressive art contributing a fair share to the strength and beauty of written expression.

R. L. LASLEY

IOWA STATE COLLEGE
AMES, IOWA

A CONTEMPORARY ENGLISH POET IN A SCHOOL EDITION

English teachers in colleges and high schools will welcome an inexpensive edition of poems selected for school use from one of the foremost English poets of today. Not only is Wilfrid Wilson Gibson in the front